

the best of
**THE
ELECTRIC
COMPANY**







It all began in 1970

with a phone call from a stranger who claimed to be Naomi Foner and who asked if I might be interested in writing some songs for a prospective Children's Television Workshop show (they didn't have a title yet) intended to help children learn to read. I was intrigued by the suggestion, not only because Naomi proved to be charming and very persuasive, but also because it was the first time that anyone had asked me to write anything different from the types of songs I had recorded. Although I was somewhat hesitant, I thought it was worth a try.

The first song I submitted was "Silent E," and, much to my delight, they used it. (Years later I would meet students who knew nothing of my other songs but who were familiar with "Silent E" from their childhood and were amazed and impressed to learn that I had written it. I tried unsuccessfully to convince them that I had also written "Jingle Bells.")

Altogether they used ten of my songs, and I recorded the soundtracks for the four that were animated. I was most pleasantly surprised to find myself working with my old friend from Harvard, Joe Raposo, who arranged and conducted the songs for the show.

I watched *The Electric Company* frequently during the years it was on and have been hoping for quite some time that someone would put out a DVD like this. Its arrival has rekindled many happy memories.

— Tom Lehrer

It was early 1970 — just a couple of weeks after *Sesame Street* had gone on the air. I was exhausted but thrilled that the show had gotten off to such a great start. Then Lloyd Morrisett, Children's Television Workshop (now known as Sesame Workshop) cofounder and chairman of the board, called and said the federal government was interested in emphasizing reading in schools and that money was probably available for a television series that would teach reading. I couldn't believe it — I had thought we could bask in the glory for at least a few minutes! So, I called our executive producer, Dave Connell, and Sam Gibbon, who was the *Sesame Street* producer most interested in the challenge of embedding curriculum into entertainment. Dave said they would take it on.

The next thing we did was call Dr. Gerald Lesser. Gerry was a professor at Harvard, our academic advisor and one of the real guiding spirits of *Sesame Street*. Fortunately, he said he would help me put together a group to guide us on the new reading show.

The advisors suggested that the show be aimed at struggling readers in the second grade — children who were in danger of becoming academically disenfranchised because they were having trouble learning to read. We all met with the advisors, and then Sam and Dave went off together to devise a format. After a weekend of nonstop work, they came back to me and said, "OK — here's the show."



I'm Just
A Clown



Who's Feelin'
Down

The Electric Company evolved somewhat differently from *Sesame Street*. With *Sesame*, I remember very clearly saying, "Let's do a *Laugh-In* for kids. Quick takes and blackouts." *The Electric Company* was more sophisticated and more challenging. I would say it was inspired more by *The Carol Burnett Show*, the wonderful sketch comedy program that was airing at the time. It was conceptually a bit like *Sesame Street* with the interruptions, but the individual pieces were longer and more complex; they had a bit of a story. We liked to refer to *The Electric Company* format as a "magazine," because that allowed us to jump from sketch comedy to animation to live-action film.

Right from the outset, we wanted well-known names who would appeal to kids as well as their parents. We ended up casting Bill Cosby, Rita Moreno and, an unknown actor named Morgan Freeman, as Easy Reader. Bill Cosby already had a very busy career in Los Angeles, but he was committed to *The Electric Company*. I don't know how he did it. He would come in on the red-eye and just jump into it, often without much preparation. It certainly didn't show on the air — his work was marvelous on *The Electric Company*.


When it debuted on October 25, 1971, *The Electric Company* was certainly not a sweet, little, charming children's show. It appealed to four- and five-year-olds, but it also worked for nine-year-olds, because it was cool. It was clearly aimed at tweens — we used their slang, their idioms, their music and their humor so that children did not have a feeling that they were being taught. It was an insider show in a funny sort of way. Children felt they were in on something.

I recently showed one of the original shows to my eight-year-old granddaughter, who figuratively stopped in her tracks. After a few minutes, she asked, "What IS this?!" As she watched, she kept saying, "This is really good. . . This is REALLY good." For me, that's the best review *The Electric Company* could ever possibly have. I'm so proud of the timelessness of it.

— Joan Ganz Cooney

Joan Ganz Cooney is a cofounder and former president of Children's Television Workshop and was instrumental in the creation of *Sesame Street* and *The Electric Company*, among other Sesame Workshop productions.





Gene Wilder was Letterman. Faster than a rolling O? That was Gene Wilder. Unbelievable. I had no idea. Maybe a few of you people knew this. Did you? Did you know it was Joan Rivers narrating the segments? Did you know that Zero Mostel voiced Spell Binder, Letterman's nemesis? How did all three of these actors, all of whom were presumably doing well in films and adult-focused television, have the time to voice two-minute animated segments of a show for eight-year-olds? It's bizarre.

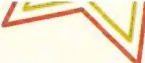
But *The Electric Company* was bizarre. Watching the shows now, it's shocking how anarchic they are. Beginning with Rita Moreno's still-startlingly feral scream — "Hey you GUUUUUUYS" — barreling into the Broadway-finale-style theme song and carrying through the dozens of mini-segments featured in each episode, the energy level maintained throughout *The Electric Company* is incredible. There are very clear educational goals to each half-hour episode, sure, but there is arguably more actual fun per minute (AFPM) than any other educational show ever attempted.

There's a certain fear in going back to watch a show like *The Electric Company*. You're afraid that it'll be awful. That you'll be embarrassed to have loved it when you were young. And there are some kids' shows, many of them, actually, that don't hold up. Or rather, they're so odd, like the work of Sid and Marty Krofft, that you can't believe they were shown to children. But *The Electric Company*, like Looney Tunes cartoons or the films of Pixar, manages to offer enough loud and bright eye candy for very small viewers while also slipping in dozens of asides, inside jokes and puns only adults would understand — did Morgan Freeman really play a character named Easy Reader? — all amid a general spirit of near-chaos that appeals to us still, and implies the show would have been pretty fun to put together.

Can kids tell when the adults are having fun too? Of course they can, and the writers and cast of *The Electric Company* definitely did some self-entertaining. There is a Julia Childs-like character here named Julia Grown-up. The recurring detective character is called Fargo North, Decoder. There is a gorilla who appears in many episodes, and his name is not Kong or Tonga or Bobo. His name is Paul. There is Spider-Man, of course, who solves word-related crimes, but in *The Electric Company's* incarnation, because he was drawn without a mouth, Spider-Man can't speak. And because he can't speak, the other cast members make frequent jokes about this. There is a sketch featuring Rita Moreno and Bill Cosby, where Moreno, as a waitress, tries to get Cosby to order the Jell-O. When he does, she tells him they're fresh out.

It's not surprising that the cast would be innovating at every level; the talent involved was stunning. There are a number of episodes of *The Electric Company* that feature, in one half-hour segment, Morgan Freeman, Bill Cosby, Rita Moreno, the





Rivers-Wilder-Mostel aspect and Irene Cara. You probably remember Freeman and Moreno, but Cosby pops up from time to time — memorably in an episode where he's seen in full golf attire, nine-ironing the dot over an *i* deep off-screen. And Irene Cara, who later starred in *Fame*, was one of the group of child actors on the show, together dubbed the Short Circus. (Some of the puns were better than others.)

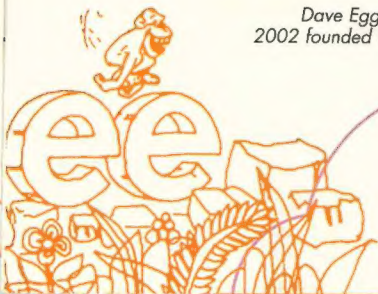
Looking at the show now, though, is almost shaming. For kids in 2006, there's not an educational TV program close to as progressive as *The Electric Company* was 30 years ago. With its forward-thinking treatment of race, gender, ethnicity — a multicultural cast, casual depictions of interracial couples, a woman playing Tarzan — *The Electric Company* was so far ahead of its time, ahead of *our* time even, that it makes you realize how conservative we've become. And crass. Though *The Electric Company* was sophisticated, you'll never see it stepping past the bounds of age-appropriateness to make an adult joke. Contrast that with some of the non-Pixar-animated films, the makers of which think that shooting a gag over children's heads means aiming for the loins.

The thing I remember most about the show, though, was Morgan Freeman. The image of him jogging through Central Park in his jeans and matching denim jacket, with a mid-size Afro and dark sunglasses, high-heeled black leather boots — that's indelible. In that bit, and in everything he did, he became and remains the suavest man ever to make a living educating and entertaining kids. Small people can smell an over-eager performer a mile away, and Freeman was never that. He was almost too cool to be doing skits about the words *pie* and *tie*, but because he was doing them, kids could feel cool watching them. That's probably why so many kids, this one at least, watched *The Electric Company* far longer than I should have. I was 15 when the show went off the air and was probably still watching it then.

There is talk now of PBS resurrecting *The Electric Company*, and let's hope they do. And if they do, let's pray that they remember the lessons the show taught us: that a little anarchy is OK for kids' education. That it can be fun, that it can be loose and that if a bunch of adults — and a few very cool adults, for Rita Moreno was pretty cool too — seem like they're having the time of their lives doing skits about words, then learning those words might seem, by example, kind of fun too.

— Dave Eggers

Dave Eggers, the editor of McSweeney's, has written books and in 2002 founded 826 Valencia, a nonprofit writing lab for students 6 - 18.





"Perhaps no other innovation in the history of education has made its presence felt among so many people in so short a time . . ."

— Dr. Sidney P. Marland, Jr., U.S. Commissioner of Education (1970-72)





It was 1971. An era of optimism and accomplishment. Young people won the right to vote at age 18. Clear air and clean water became high government priorities, following Earth Day demonstrations and the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and space travel began to look like an everyday miracle with the fourth successful U.S. moon landing mission in just two years.

It was also an era of anger and frustration. The Vietnam War continued to cast a pall over the nation, exacerbated by the publication of the Pentagon Papers that summer, exposing our government's deception in the conduct of the war. Racial tensions still haunted everyday life after more than a decade of clashes. These factors and more all helped contribute to a generation gap that tore at families, with adults and young people on opposite sides of practically any discussion.

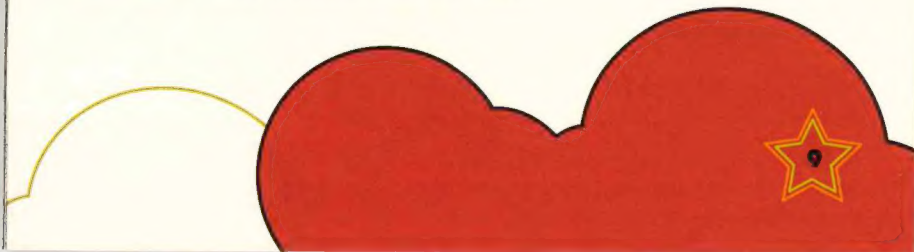
In that atmosphere of conflict and contradiction, even the centuries-old dream of successful space travel had led to a new lament about life back on Earth. "We can put a man on the moon, why can't we. . .?" The list of unsolved problems attached to that question was a long one. Like a space mission, each one called for the best and the brightest of solutions.

Children's Television Workshop (CTW), creator of *Sesame Street*, rose to answer one of those challenges: teaching children to read.

Using television.

At the urging of the United States government.

As one of the original *Sesame Street* funders, the U.S. Office of Education had made the request as part of its "Right to Read" universal literacy program. Though the three commercial networks at the time (ABC, CBS, NBC) reached more viewers, CTW's track record on public television stations (PBS) was undeniable. In just two years, *Sesame Street* broadcasts had become what Education Commissioner Dr. Sidney Marland, Jr., described as "virtually a national institution" and "one of the best investments the Office of Education has ever made."



CTW president Joan Ganz Cooney saw this as the opportunity to take the next step in educational television and rose to the occasion. *The Electric Company* was born.

The show's mission was to teach reading skills to seven- to ten-year-olds (second, third and fourth graders), especially those who were having difficulty learning to read in school. *The Electric Company* was to "turn them on" to the power of reading.

In preparation, *The Electric Company* became one of the most thoroughly researched programs in the history of educational television. Executive producer Sam Gibbon, Jr. (who'd previously worked as a producer on *Sesame Street*), helped spearhead this weighty task, assembling an A-list team, drawing talent from throughout the world. In addition to high level educators, psychologists, psychiatrists, sociolinguists, reading experts and librarians, among other top-notch professionals, were such popular writers as Maurice Sendak, Rod Serling and Ray Bradbury. Dr. Gerald S. Lesser, of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, chaired CTW's advisory board. For almost two years they examined existing curriculum and teaching techniques, held seminars, visited schools and pondered every aspect of the question: How could television be used to teach reading?

Equally important, the show's production team mixed CTW veterans with talent from commercial broadcasting and advertising. These included, in addition to Sam Gibbon, Jr., fellow executive producer David Connell (also from *Sesame Street*) and Paul Dooley (a radio ad writer and veteran of Chicago's *Second City*), who headed the first season's writing team. Joe Raposo (CTW's musical director) composed the new program's title song.

Theirs was the blueprint to execute the program's challenging educational mission, including the strategy for a truly imposing task: winning over a demanding young audience.

By age seven, American children were well-versed at watching television. They were familiar with then-current Saturday and Sunday morning favorites from the commercial networks, including *Scooby-Doo*, *Bugs Bunny*, *Bullwinkle* and much more. As expert viewers, they knew what they liked and what they did not like. They would instantly dismiss the dull and preachy. *The Electric Company* needed to make a creditable impression.

There was an even more complex challenge with children who had started with *Sesame Street*, for by age seven they saw themselves as ready to move beyond "kid stuff." For them, *Sesame Street* had probably been the first television series their parents had deliberately placed them in front of the set to watch. As three- to five-year-olds, *Sesame Street* had been a magical experience, a television series aimed directly



think
thick
thud



at their interests. They had also been exposed to fundamental notions of numbers, the alphabet, shapes and colors.

Sesame Street had been the series they were supposed to watch as kids, and they had learned to enjoy it. *The Electric Company* had to become the series they wanted to watch now that they were older and ready to change the channel without hesitation. To that end, *The Electric Company* immediately established its own look and style, tailored for young viewers. It was a half-hour magazine-style comedy-variety program, including music and animation, airing five days a week (130 episodes per season). There was a central cast of adult performers along with a group of pre-teens/teens (known as the Short Circus, also doubling as the "house" band). All ethnically diverse. Male and female. Side by side, starting with the program's opening theme song.

The cast members set the tone at the beginning of the first episode (October 25, 1971) as they came onto the set and greeted each other and the viewers at home. Relaxed. Conversational. Casual. "Hello" "How ya doin'?" and "*Buenos días*" were



quickly followed by such phrases as "What's shakin'!" "Let's have some skin!" "What's cookin'!" and "Gimmie five." There were no heavy-handed lessons on tolerance and brotherhood. Far more effective, *The Electric Company* simply presented generational and ethnic cooperation as a given, requiring no lectures or explanations.

There was also no star billing in the introductions. The names of the performers did not even appear on screen until the closing credits. Rather, true to the program's name, this was a versatile *company* of players, entering each child's home on the electric stage of television, offering songs, skits, cartoons and clever wordplay.

The Electric Company treated its young viewers as a hip audience that was in on the jokes and shared the program's snappy attitude. This was clearly their program, designed for *their* entertainment and *their* education. As such, *The Electric Company* was embraced from day one, not just by those having trouble with reading, but by any child who enjoyed good entertainment.

Many young viewers already knew company member Bill Cosby from his family comedy routines, but over time they also came to recognize the other performers by sight, if not always by name. Along with Cosby, the company included Rita Moreno, Morgan Freeman, Jim Boyd, Lee Chamberlin, Judy Graubart, Skip Hinnant and, later, Hattie Winston, Luis Avalos and Danny Seagren. They did not play just one character each, living at some fictional location such as 123 Sesame Street. Rather, they went wherever the writers would take them as a member of the company. Nobody was typecast. The possibilities were wide open.

They were in good hands. *The Electric Company's* writing team was superb. Scripting what amounted to a daily variety show, they drew on their collective experience of meeting deadlines in commercial television comedy and advertising to deliver programs that were challenging, innovative and true to their education message. Head writer Tom Whedon (successor to Paul Dooley) had written for *Captain Kangaroo* and for talk-show host Dick Cavett before arriving at *The Electric Company*. Under his leadership, the writing team won the show's first Emmy®.

The writers and performers developed a solid lineup of recurring characters over the years. Some of these included Fargo North, Decoder (Hinnant), J. Arthur Crank (Boyd), Valerie the Librarian (Winston), Jennifer of the Jungle (Graubart), Pandora (Moreno), Dr. Doolats (Avalos), Madame Rosalie (Chamberlin), Dr. Frankenstein and Igor (Freeman and Avalos), the Ice Cream Man (Cosby) and Easy Reader (Freeman), along with two fully masked characters: Paul the Gorilla (Boyd) and the Marvel Comics hero Spider-Man (Seagren).





All were designed to pitch not only specific reading skills, but also the idea that reading was fun, cool and great for landing the best laugh lines. Easy Reader embodied that attitude. When he entered, his confident smile reassured young viewers that with a little thought and effort, even tough-looking phrases could become "e-a-s-y reading."

Episodes of *The Electric Company* were designed to be self-contained so that they could be viewed in any order. Within an individual episode, though, there were reinforcing references to key words and concepts throughout. A line used in one piece might be the hook line in the next. Sometimes the technique was even more subtle, akin to commercial product placement, with recurring words or letter combinations quietly worked in.

Through it all, *The Electric Company* focused on developing "decoding skills," the ability to analyze spellings and sounds in order to understand printed words, even unfamiliar ones. Under every possible guise, words appeared on screen in every routine. Words were part of the entertainment. Words were characters. Pulsating. Colorful. Words were alive.

One simple routine involved two silhouette heads on screen, facing each other. One would start a word, with the first few letters flowing from the lips. The other would finish the word, sending out the remaining letters. As the letters settled on the screen, the two heads would also speak each part, blending together for the complete word. It was speak-along phonics.

Dialogue, especially arguments or the quest for clarification, provided perfect opportunities for oral and visual repetition by the cast.

All the characters were inevitably involved in word puzzles. Detective Fargo North, Decoder, helped clients to read puzzling messages that were missing key letters, using the wrong letters or running the words out of order.

Animation was another key element to the show. Much like Britain's *Monty Python's Flying Circus* (a contemporary to *The Electric Company*), the animation sequences served both as transition devices between skits and also as their own routines. The flexible nature of animation made it particularly effective at blending words into the scenes.

In one cartoon skit, a woman left her home. Only her parrot remained inside. A man came to the door and knocked, leading to the following exchange:

Parrot: "Who is it?"

Man: "It's the plumber. I've come to fix the sink."



That dialogue was repeated again and again, with the words appearing on screen each time they were spoken. At each successive exchange, the man became increasingly agitated. Frustrated and fuming, he suddenly collapsed. When the woman returned, she saw the dead man on her doorstep, and wondered aloud: "Who is it?" The parrot replied from inside: "It's the plumber. He's come to fix the sink."

Allowing characters to suffer for the sake of punch lines, puns and wordplay was another reminder to young viewers that they were not being handed preachy and pedantic "lessons" of life. They were watching and hearing funny jokes and entertaining stories in a smart, well-done show. Any lessons just came along for the ride.

"The Adventures Of Letterman" cartoon featured (all uncredited) Gene Wilder voicing the title character, Zero Mostel as the villainous Spell Binder and Joan Rivers providing the narration, beginning with the introduction:

Faster than a rolling 'o,'
Stronger than silent 'e,'
Able to leap capital 't' in a single bound.
It's a word, it's a plan. It's Letterman.

In each story, Spell Binder would magically substitute a key letter in a word (turning a concert "horn" into an ear of "corn"), causing chaos. Letterman would thwart the scheme by restoring the correct letter, plucking it from the front of his varsity "lettered" sweater.

Drawing a page from commercial television, *The Electric Company* also included newly produced Road Runner cartoon segments by the character's creator, Chuck Jones. Another recurring animation feature (dealing with sound clusters such as "oo") alluded to the film *2001: A Space Odyssey* by using its signature theme ("Also Sprach Zarathustra" by Richard Strauss) and the image of a space monolith.

Music was the final element that tied *The Electric Company* package together. From beginning to end, each episode was filled with original tunes. Short riffs. Soulful ballads. Dialogue delivered as jazzy rhythmic exchanges. Elaborate production numbers saturated in colorful special effects and Broadway glitter. Everyone sang, from the Short Circus to the main adult cast.

In an unusual approach to song composition, the script writers started the process. They penned lyrics to reflect the educational matter, then turned over their words to the music director (Joe Raposo, then Gary Friedman and Dave Connor). In addition, satirist Tom Lehrer occasionally contributed songs, including "L-Y," "Silent E," "O-U (The Hound Song)" and "S-N (Snore, Sniff, and Sneeze)." Smart musical originals.

From first note to last, young viewers at home and at school loved the series and so did educators.



From the start, *The Electric Company* was designed to be integrated into school curriculum plans. PBS scheduled two airings each day in most markets, once during the school hours and again in the late afternoon. CTW distributed extensive background material directly to schools, spelling out the education strategies used in the program. The series began with a biweekly newsletter for teachers and, over time, expanded their reach to include a magazine, activity book, a comic book and a wide range of multimedia kits of classroom supplementary material.

Within two months of the series' premiere, the show was being used by an estimated 18,811 schools — almost one fourth of the nation's public and private schools containing grades two, three and four — and this included roughly 70 percent of large urban schools. That meant an estimated two million pupils were viewing *The Electric Company* at school.

A first-year study conducted by the Educational Testing Service found that *The Electric Company* contributed to significant gains in reading skills for viewers in comparison to nonviewers. These gains registered for all groups, no matter the gender or ethnic background. Individual school districts reported their own success stories. For example, a South Dakota school that aired *The Electric Company* at 9 a.m. reported tardiness dropped from an average of 80 late arrivals each week to almost none.

Observing inner-city children using the reading center of the City College of New York, Dr. Shirley Feldman of the School of Education was impressed at how *The Electric Company* could clear up confusion in reading convention issues by using television razzmatazz and catchy music to drive home punctuation points. A third grade teacher in Lincoln Heights, Ohio (near Cincinnati), echoed the sentiment, noting that children who complained that they did not "get it" from a textbook or classroom blackboard would understand the same point immediately when it was demonstrated on *The Electric Company*.

The Electric Company consistently used feedback from teachers, students and its ongoing advisory committee to tweak the series. A major change starting in the second season was to slow the show down, reducing the number of segments and allowing the remaining ones to run longer. The less frenetic pace made the program even stronger.



In the fourth season, Spider-Man joined the company, literally stepping from a comic book panel and speaking only through "word balloons" on screen.

Over time, the Short Circus teens also became more prominent in skits. During the final two seasons, in fact, their faces were the first ones to appear in the program's opening montage.

Although *The Electric Company* aired the last of its original episodes on April 15, 1977, that did not mark the end of the program's influence. The final two seasons (260 episodes) were designed to repeat as a unit in two-year rerun cycles, constantly greeting new generations; those aired on PBS through 1985. From 1999 to 2003, series reruns played on the Noggin cable network.

Over six seasons (780 episodes), *The Electric Company* remained true to its educational mission. It earned awards and citations. The series often drew audience numbers greater than PBS prime-time offerings. Most important, it really did connect with young viewers.

In a 1975 report, Joan Ganz Cooney noted that "even the most optimistic producers and researchers did not dare to expect that the series would reach its young target audience so quickly and extensively, especially in elementary classrooms."





When *The Electric Company* first aired, home video recorders were a statistical blip in the marketplace and DVDs had not yet been invented. So the series never had a place on the family video shelf.

Until now.

With this DVD package, *The Electric Company* is back. Those who were there the first time will reconnect with happy memories. Just as important, newcomers will see one of the most entertaining appeals ever for the joy of reading.

Sit back. Watch.

Then take the reading advice to heart: turn off the television, grab a book and read. It's easy.

— **Walter J. Podrazik**

Walter J. Podrazik is coauthor of ten books, including the season-by-season television history *Watching TV: Six Decades Of American Television with Harry Castleman* (Syracuse University Press; www.watchingtv.org). Podrazik is head exhibition writer for the Museum of Broadcast Communications in Chicago.





DISC I

Episode #1 – THE FIRST EPISODE

Original Broadcast Date: October 25, 1971

The premiere episode introduced sketches and characters that would stay with the show throughout its entire run: FARGO NORTH, DECODER, J. ARTHUR CRANK, the MONOLITH animation and EASY READER. Also features: LOVE OF CHAIR, the soap opera spoof that lasted through the first season, and the unforgettable PARROT AND THE PLUMBER ("WHO IS IT?") animation

Episode #10

Original Broadcast Date: November 5, 1971

Features: LORELEI THE CHICKEN, SILHOUETTES, DJ MEL MOUNDS, "AN E ON THE END" song, I AM CUTE animation with Mel Brooks, VI'S DINER, "UNDAY" song, LOVE OF CHAIR and CRANK CALLS

Episode #14

Original Broadcast Date: November 11, 1971

Features: GET IT TOGETHER animation, TALKING TESSIE DOLL, "STREET SIGNS" song, FAT/THIN animation, "I'M IN LOVE WITH A GIANT" song, THEATER IN THE DARK, FARGO: STUCK ON AN ISLAND and LOVE OF CHAIR

Episode #21

Original Broadcast Date: November 22, 1971

Features: DRIBBLE COLA ad campaign, MYSTICAL SECRETS OF LIFE, "HE HO HI" song, CHARLIE CHUCKLE THEATRICAL AGENT, FARGO AND THE LONE RANGER and LOVE OF CHAIR

Episode #26

Original Broadcast Date: November 29, 1971

Features: BEES animation, BOB IS TALL animation, BOB IS A FINK, BROADWAY BOB, THE SAME AS YOUR NAME GAME, "HOW IS HOWARD" song, THE FROG PRINCE animation and LOVE OF CHAIR

Special Features: **Rita Moreno Remembers** – the only female performer to have won an Oscar,[®] an Emmy,[®] a Tony[®] and a Grammy,[®] Rita looks back on her experiences with *The Electric Company*.
Outtakes





DISC 2

Episode #109

Original Broadcast Date: March 23, 1972

Features: "GOLLY, THIS LOLLIPOP IS FOLLOWING ME" song, ARNOLD AND ALICE AT THE BEACH, THE WORD FIGHT, CRANK CALL, LETTER REMOVER, I AM A FLY, FARGO: FLY YOUR FROG TO LONDON, THEATER IN THE DARK and LOVE OF CHAIR

Episode #131

Original Broadcast Date: October 23, 1972

Features: CINDERELLA, "BOOM" song, THE COOL FOOLS animation, A VERY SHORT BOOK: JACK & THE BEANSTALK, Rowan & Martin, EASY READER, FARGO GETS THE BIRD with Big Bird and LOVE OF CHAIR

Episode #181

Original Broadcast Date: January 1, 1973

Features: JENNIFER OF THE JUNGLE, DRACULA, Lorne Greene and Michael Landon, THEATER IN THE DARK, MEL MOUNDS' BASEBALL GAME, LORELEI and Walt Frazier, TARZAN: "IT'S SO NICE TO HAVE A MAN AROUND THE HOUSE" song and FARGO MEETS TEX APTHORP

Episode #285

Original Broadcast Date: November 23, 1973

Features: SNUG/BUG/RUG animation with Mel Brooks, THE ADVENTURES OF LETTERMAN, MOVIE SET: DON'T BUG ME, PLEASE STOP, A FALLING STAR IN A JAR animation, JENNIFER OF THE JUNGLE and "IT'S NOT THE SAME SINCE YOU LEFT" song

Episode #321

Original Broadcast Date: January 14, 1974

Features: CHINA SALESMAN (DON'T BREAK ANYTHING), LETTERMAN: A JARRING EXPERIENCE, CIRCUS TICKET SELLER, "I LOVE TO TAKE A BATH IN A CASKET" song, THE CREATURE (THE PREACHER) and "UNBUTTON YOUR HEART" song

Special Feature: Joan Ganz Cooney "Then And Now" – from 1971 to the present, the founder of the Children's Television Workshop has never wavered in her commitment to early education.



DISC 3

Episode #379

Original Broadcast Date: April 3, 1974

Features: LITTLE GREEN MEN animation, FOUND THE R IN THE ALPHABET SOUP, ROAD RUNNER, "RANDY, RANDY" song, EASY READER, SIMON SAYS, I SHOT AN ARROW IN THE AIR, "GREEDY GREGORY'S GRABBED THE GREEN GRAPES" song and "HIRCUS OF THE CIRCUS" song

Episode #386

Original Broadcast Date: April 15, 1974

Features: ROAD RUNNER, DO NOT BOTHER THIS GIANT PERSON, CLOWN WITH AN IP ON HIS CHEST, "SILENT E" song, SNEAK THIEVES, A VERY SHORT BOOK: FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER, MARVIN'S LAMP and LETTERMAN: STICKY FINANCES

Episode #391

Original Broadcast Date: October 21, 1974

Features: TRICK OR TREAT AT DRACULA'S, "LOUISE LANDER ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE (TRY NOT TO TREMBLE)" song, LETTERMAN: THE GREAT ESCAPE, TO THE QUEEN, THE PUNCTUATION BROTHERS, SPIDER-MAN VS. THE SPOILER and EASY READER

Episode #437

Original Broadcast Date: December 24, 1974

Features: SEE SPOT RUN animation, MY NEW LOUDSPEAKER, MARCHING BAND, "HEY DIDDLE" song, BUSTER'S MESSY ROOM, HONEST JOHN'S USED CARS, THE BLOB and "HERE COMES THE BLOB" song


Episode #453

Original Broadcast Date: January 15, 1975

Features: "OSCAR THE GROUCH" song, CAPTAIN KUMQUAT AND THE BLUE BEETLE, "WHISTLE" song, MARCHING BAND, "MY HAIR IS A FRIGHT" song, SHOE STORE, "RIGHT ON" song and ROAD RUNNER

Special Features: "Silent E" Karaoke – sing along with Tim Lehrer's unforgettable and imaginative song.
The Creative Team Remembers – executive producer Sam Gibbon and head writer Tom Whedon reminisce.





DISC 4

Episode #491

Original Broadcast Date: March 10, 1975

Features: MMMMM MACHINE animation, "A NEW PAIR OF SNEAKERS" song, THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA, VI'S DINER with Grover, ASK FAIRY GODMOTHER animation and TWO GUYS ON A WRECKED BOAT

Episode #72A

Original Broadcast Date: January 27, 1976

Features: TRICK OR TREAT, WHAT HAS 4 WHEELS AND FLIES? animation, EASY READER, "IT ONLY RAINS WHERE I AM" song, LETTERMAN: SINGING IN THE TRAIN, "IS IT LOVE" song, COWBOY/MY NAME IS KATHY, HAPPY BIRTHDAY DR. DOLOTS and ROAD RUNNER

Episode #110A

Original Broadcast Date: March 19, 1976

Features: "I LOVE TO DO THINGS THAT BEGIN WITH SN" song, SNEAK A SNACK, FARGO'S BIRTHDAY PARTY with Spidey, MAD SCIENTIST: ALL PURPOSE SPORTS MONSTER, MARY, MARY, QUITE CONTRARY, "A PITCHER WE KNOW" song and SNOWBALL AND THE 6 DWARVES

Episode #79B

Original Broadcast Date: February 3, 1977

Features: "I'M A FUNNY GUY" song, EASY READER, PAUL REVERE, "If" song, CINDERELLA: IF YOU WASH THE DISHES, HUMPTY DUMPTY/I AM GOING TO GET THAT CATERPILLAR animation and "I LIKE FISH FOOD" song

Episode #130B

Original Broadcast Date: April 15, 1977

Features: "I WOULD DIE FOR A PIECE OF YOUR PIE" song and animation, MAD SCIENTIST: FIEND, "CHARLIE TRIED TO TEACH HIS CHIMP TO CHA CHA CHA" song and animation, THREE MUSKETEERS, TOP OF THE 9th - THERE GOES THE BALL animation, SPIDER-MAN: UP AGAINST THE WALL and "WE'RE GLAD YOU CAME TO CALL" song

Special Feature: June Angela Remembers - "Julie" in the Short Circus, June Angela was with the cast for the entire run of the show.



THE ELECTRIC COMPANY

Executive Producers **SAMUEL Y. GIBSON, JR.** • **DAVE D. CONNELL** Head Writers **PAUL DOOLEY** • **TOM WHEDON**
Writers **JOHN BOHI** • **SARA COMPTON** • **TOM DUNSMUIR** • **ELAINE LARON** • **THAD MUMFORD** • **ALAN RIEFF** •
ALBERT ROSENZWEIG • **JEREMY STEVENS** • **JIM THURMAN** Music Director **JOE RAPOSO**

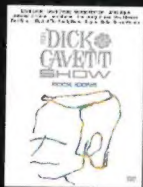
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Produced by **LORRIE SHAPIRO**
 Co-Producers: **ROBERT BADER, MARK EVESTAFF, HOWARD LEIB**
 Associate Producer: **BRIAN BLUM**
 Art Direction & Design: **GEORGE McWILLIAMS, JASON KO and TODD GALLOPO**
 @ **MEAT AND POTATOES, INC.**
 Trivia Graphics: **CLOUDRED MULTIMEDIA**
 Business Affairs: **DAVE McINTOSH**
 Production: **JEFF PALO**
 Artwork/Package Supervision: **JOHN ROBERTS**
 Editorial Supervision: **JULEE STOVER**
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 Special Thanks to **BOB EMMER, GARSON FOOS, HEATHER HANSSEN, RICHARD SIEGMEISTER, DEREK DRESSLER, BRIAN WARD, HOUSTON HUDDLESTON**
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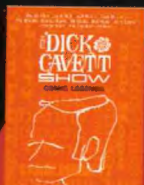
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